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Statement submitted by Comité français pour l'Afrique du Sud, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

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Statement

The year 2015 sees the end of the MDGs and marks the launch of a new universal sustainable development agenda for the coming decades.

Unlike the MDGs, which dealt with the various dimensions of development separately, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to adopt a more integrated approach to human rights and place them at the centre of development programmes.

While progress has been made, the following objectives are essential for sustainable development to occur and to ensure each person dignity and a basic level of well-being:

- To combat poverty and eradicate hunger by ensuring balanced trade between North and South, making use of local expertise, respecting local natural resources, and conducting local development projects;
- To strengthen our global partnership by building developing States' capacity, transferring technologies and sharing knowledge so that every person has access to quality education and training, and thus to employment opportunities, quality health care, safe water, electricity, telecommunications and transport;
- To strengthen democracy, good governance, and the rule of law by establishing and ensuring respect for effective and transparent public institutions, by developing independent judicial institutions, and by effectively fighting corruption and impunity;
- To step up the fight against the effects of climate change by taking urgent measures to put respect for the environment at the centre of industrial projects and trade and to raise the awareness of States and individuals;
- To improve global management of forced migratory movements by strengthening the capacities of the countries of the South in terms of reception of asylum seekers and refugees and by putting in place a specific protection system for climate refugees;
- To prevent conflicts by fighting xenophobia and all forms of discrimination and strengthening the culture of non-violence through public and private educational structures and all communications networks.

A mechanism for periodic assessment of States by their peers is desirable so that progress towards achievement of the SDGs can be regularly evaluated. Civil society must be involved in that process.

The SDGs cannot be achieved if no lessons are drawn from past experiences. What now needs to be done is to take into account some targets forgotten in the previous agenda. Again, local characteristics and the context peculiar to each State need to be kept in mind, setting realistic goals that will allow each stakeholder to achieve not only quantitative but also qualitative results.

All actors in development need to be involved, as do private sector stakeholders, members of civil society, and in particular youth and women. Each State and each people, in North and South both, will have to make a commitment. And no one must be left out.